



AUBLE LAKE

Community ...

Local entrepreneurs **Galen and Jay Auble** developed Auble Lake in 1962. Nine years later they sold six acres of land, including the pond, to the City of Ord. The pond has a surface area of about three acres and was originally five feet deep with sloping banks for wading. Park facilities include football and baseball fields; a swimming pool; campgrounds; covered picnic shelters; tennis, basketball and sand volleyball courts; playground equipment; and restrooms with showers. Ord executed a comprehensive plan to improve the park and recreation facilities through a grassroots effort led by local students. The rehabilitation of Auble Lake became the plan's cornerstone.

Challenges ...

Before renovation, Auble Lake's maximum depth was four feet. Partly because of this, the pond had poor water clarity, substantial algae growth and high nutrient concentrations. The overall poor water quality stunted aquatic vegetation and kept the pond from supporting fish populations. In addition to water quality problems, it was seeping approximately 4.5 million gallons of water per year into nearby Dane Creek, requiring significant recharge from city wells.

Solutions ...

In 2001, lake restoration funds were received through the CLEAR program. The plan for the pond focused on bed reconstruction, shoreline repair, bottom sealing, outlet replacement, and enhancement and education. About 19,000 cubic yards of sediment were removed from the

pond, increasing average depth by eight to 10 feet. The pond bed was sculpted into an irregular shape to enhance conditions for aquatic life, and a submerged island was constructed five feet deep and layered with pea gravel for fish spawning. Shorelines were reshaped and sloped to support vegetation and stabilized with matting and rock. The pond's bottom and shore were lined to reduce seepage. A water level control system was installed to monitor and adjust elevation of the pond, along with a gate valve and discharge pipe for draining overflows into Dane Creek. A management and education plan was developed for the pond, which will be used as a guide for Ord High School students.

Results ...

The project brought significant water quality improvements. Turbidity decreased by 95 percent, phosphorus by 86 percent and nitrogen by 74 percent. The turbidity decrease allowed for aquatic plants to grow that will provide habitat, uptake nutrients and help stabilize shorelines. The pond was restocked with largemouth bass, bluegill and channel catfish. Approximate cost of the 18-month project was \$319,000; \$270,000 from CLEAR and \$49,000 from the City of Ord. Other project partners include Ord Junior/Senior High School, Ord Elementary School, Ord Jaycees, Lower Loup Natural Resources District, Loup Basin Resource Conservation and Development District, and Jacobson Helgoth Consultants.



CLEAR project leader Elbert Traylor of the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality speaks at dedication activities for the restored lake.